

# **Governor's State Workforce Investment Board Youth Council**

**Red Lion Colonial Hotel  
Helena, Montana  
October 29, 2008**

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Gail Richardson, Chair; Margaret Bowls; Karen Duncan; Dan Dolan; Sara Fox; Jake Gustin; James McDonald; Warren Means; and Mike Nephew.

**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** Marcella Buster; Curt Campbell; Tescha Hawley; and James Patelis.

**STAFF:** Leisa Smith; Dan Bernhardt; and Danielle Nettleton.

**GUESTS:** Teresa McCarthy, Kelly Chapman, Suzanne Ferguson, Lisa Newman, Sandy Merdinger, Stephanie Gray, and Sheila Hogan.

## **I. Welcome and Introductions**

Gail Richardson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:17 p.m. She welcomed staff, council members, and guests.

- Roll Call, Housekeeping, and New Documents

Danielle Nettleton conducted roll call, addressed house keeping items, and reviewed the meeting documents. Chair Richardson explained the council conducts business under Roberts Rules of Order and would relax the Rules to allow informal discussion among members. She reminded council members to state their name clearly when speaking for the accuracy of the minutes. Sara Fox announced she no longer works as a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Youth Program Provider for the Billing's Human Resource Development Council (HRDC.) She now works as a Transitional Living Specialist for the Montana Foster Care Independence Program assisting foster youth in gaining the necessary life skills to make a successful transition into adult community living by providing a variety of services.

- Agenda

Chair Richardson asked if there were any changes to the agenda. The agenda was approved by consensus, as presented.

- Meeting Minutes – May 29, 2008

Chair Richardson asked if there were any changes to the October 29, 2008 minutes. Karen Duncan moved to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Jake Gustin seconded the motion.

## **II. Presentations**

### **Student Assistance Foundation (SAF) – KnowHow2GO**

Kelly Chapman presented a PowerPoint presentation on KnowHow2Go national campaign on college access. The campaign is presented in four steps:

1. Be a pain. Tell everyone you know that you want to go to college and don't stop until you find an adult who will help you by being a mentor.
2. Push yourself. Find out what classes you need to take in high school to meet college entrance requirements. Take the tough classes like algebra II.
3. Find the right fit. Find a school that matches your career interests and reflects your goals and personality.
4. Get your hands on some cash. There is money available to help pay for college or trade school including federal, state, institutional, private funds, scholarships, and grants.

The campaign is not specific to one group of the population; it encourages adults to share their knowledge. The SAF is able to work with several partners. Ms. Chapman presented videos about tougher classes geared for 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students. The viral videos can be viewed online at [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com). She also presented the public service announcement (PSA) for the TV commercial. With the current elections, donated ads have been lessened. Anyone can use the campaign for free, including the use of the videos and materials.

The KnowHow2GO website (KnowHow2GO.org) provides a virtual college tour for students. The tour provides a broad range of areas from exploring the admissions office to designing and decorating your own dorm room. A social networking website called The Montana College Access Network has been created similar to the Face Book website but utilized for college networking. Mr. Gustin explained the network is new, there are many agencies doing different things. It was narrowed to post secondary education opportunities and is designed to facilitate conversations to understand how everyone can work better together. The campaign is able to be more creative and humorous than others, hopefully drawing attention from prospective college students.

#### Office of the Commissioner for Higher Education (OCHE) – GEAR UP

Sandy Merdinger reported on the GEAR UP program. OCHE received the grant for the second time. They are currently in the fourth year of a six year grant. OCHE partnered with the Office of Public Instruction (OPI.) The discretionary grant program is designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education. GEAR UP provides six-year grants to states and partnerships to provide services at high-poverty middle and high schools. GEAR UP grantees services to an entire cohort of students beginning no later than the seventh grade and follow the cohort through high school. GEAR UP funds are also used to provide college scholarships to low-income students. For a school to qualify, 50% or more of the students need to be using the reduced or free lunch program. When a class is chosen, the entire class is served. \$900,000 is placed into a trust fund to provide the students with scholarships. Two thirds of the 4,000 students being served live on a reservation. During the first grant, 66% of the students who graduated went on to a post secondary education. The current average for the State of Montana is 58%. Other large pieces of the program bringing success include mentoring, job shadowing, career fairs, tutoring programs, and academic enrichment. The state will pay one time for a student to take the ACT standardized achievement examination for college admission.

### **III. WIA Youth “Lacks Work History” Definition**

Suzanne Ferguson, WIA Supervisor reported during a recent United States Department of Labor (USDOL) monitoring visit, one of elements of the sixth barrier definition needed further clarification. WIA staff contacted providers across the state to provide input on elements that could further define “poor work history.” Based on information received from youth providers WIA staff composed the following recommendation for the Youth Council to consider when defining “poor work history” to include youth who:

- (1) Are working less than full-time;
- (2) Have been fired from a job;
- (3) Have a sporadic work history (history of job hopping);

(4) Are working in jobs that are unskilled or dead-end; or

(5) No past work history.

Chair Richardson expressed concerns with youth who work part-time, explaining most youth in school do not work full-time. Ms. Ferguson explained the definition would provide an opening for more youth, helping providers enroll a youth in need. Mike Nephew agreed by stating the more options available to enroll a youth is a good thing. The definition could be used for youth who switch jobs frequently. Warren Means expressed concern about the fit of the definition for a youth with no long term goals. Lisa Newman announced she has only used the sixth barrier three times in the last year. Sara Fox believed the definition would help provide easy documentation to defend an enrollment. The definition would also make it easier for a provider to help an at risk youth before more serious setbacks occur. Ms. Duncan asked for a definition of a dead-end job. Sheila Hogan explained a dead-end job is a position with no opportunity of advancement. She provided an example of an individual who was recently enrolled and had no where to advance other than owning the company. Ms Hogan expressed her agreement with the proposed recommendation.

Margret Bowles made a motion to approve the definition of "Poor Work History" for the purpose of the WIA Youth Program. Jim McDonald seconded the motion which passed with Mr. Nephew abstaining.

#### **IV. Montana Shared Youth Vision Update**

Ms. Bowles gave a brief history from past Youth Council meeting discussions. The perception that a General Education Diploma GED is inferior to a High School Diploma has been fading over the years. Today the goal is making sure everyone has some type of a credential. Everyday, 18 students drop out of school in Montana. During the Youth Council meeting in May, The Shared Youth Vision Team presented research and asked to present to the full board for their recommendation to proceed in asking for the Governor's support. The team was advised to expand their partnerships and work on leveraging resources. The team held meetings during the summer and presented their research to potential partners and received a lot of support. Many agencies signed on as a partner, the overall vision of the team has been received well by partners. The next step is to develop a plan to get started in reaching out to the public. The lack of funding and resources is a crucial issue for the team. Council members suggested the team identify a champion, develop a goal and the steps to reach their specific goal. They were also encouraged to find a role model and identify best practices from other states. The team would like to present to the full board during a future meeting.

#### **V. Other Business**

Ms. Smith provided a brief overview of the State Workforce Investment Board's (SWIB) recent facilitated strategic planning sessions. The Executive Committee will be meeting on November 19, 2008 to focus on the next action steps. Facilitator Lindsey Woolsey, Senior Policy Associate, Corporation for a Skilled Workforce worked with the Board to identify existing tools; One-Stop Systems and the Youth Council were identified. Staff will continue to update the Council on the Board's process. Council discussed possible meeting dates; deciding to meet in conjunction with the January 22, 2009 SWIB meeting and again in early May near the Wolf Point area.

#### **VI. Adjourn**

With no further business, Chair Richardson adjourned the meeting at 3:48 p.m.